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GABBY HAYES WESTERN















# GABBY HAYES WESTERN BEAR ! CAN THE MIGHT! FALCON BE HUMBLED BY GUCH A SILLY-LOOKING OLD FOOL ? EAVE MY ME, SLASHER THAT HAIRY CLOWN MUST PAY FOR HIS RESISTANCE ! SO LONG AS HE'S ON THE LOOSE FOLKS WILL RECALL THE FALCON'S ONLY FAILURE ! E FORLORN FALCON FLEES

RIDE ON, ELLIE! I'YORE MOUNTAIN L AFTER I TURN IN TWO-BIT BANDIT

HEY!

FROM GARGY F THE LAW HEARS OF NEVER RAISE THAT

















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# GIVEAWAY SILVER A Buck Desmond Story

By Dick Kraus



THEN the Clement brothers saw Buck Desmond riding down out of the foothills, with a herd of bawling strays before him, they rode out to meet him. Waving their battered Stetsons and shouting hoarsely, the two young ranchers helped Buck haze the horntossing steers and cows into the roundup corral of the Double-C spread. Then big Johnny Clement reined his broomtail bay in next to the rambling cowboy's paint horse,

"Nice going, Buck," Clement said, "When we hired you to help us with the roundup, we didn't figger you'd do such a fast job up in

"Thanks, Johnny!" Buck returned, reining the paint horse in. "But you'd better take a look at your herd, before you start tossing prairie flowers around. You may not be so all-fired happy!"

Johnny and Newt Clement scrutinized the dust-hazed herd. As they did so,-their tanned

faces grew grim. "Newt, I reckon you see what he means,"

Johnny Clement said in a flat voice, "Plenty of grown stock-but mighty few calves! Looks as if someone is helping himself to our un-

Buck Desmond nodded

"That jibes," he agreed. "And, in four or five places, I saw the ashes of fires-a couple still warm. From the marks around them, I'd say that someone was using a running iron . . . branding your beef with his mark!"

Newt Clement wrenched his bay's head

"Thanks, Buck," he said. "You did a good iob! But I think Johnny and I have a pretty good idea who's behind this calf-rustling! We've suspected one of our neighbors, Fargo Sears, of being mighty loose with a running iron for some time! Other ranchers have accused him too, but he always manages to wriggle free! Suppose we check on bim now!"

Leaving the herd in the Double-C corral.

mesquite and manzanilla at a steady, groundcovering pace, they soon came out on a mesa overlooking a stretch of barren prairie-land. Two miles away stood a cluster of faded ranch

Newt Clement pointed down at the frame buildings.

"There's Fargo Sears' outfit-the Lazy S. Doesn't look like much, but he always manages to bring a fine lot of critters to market!

Let's go down!" When the three Double-C riders approached the Lazy S buildings, Fargo Sears himself came out to meet them, walking in a slow, sidling step. Behind the big rancher came three other men. All of them were unshaven

and tight-lipped, and on their bowed legs they bore the chaparejos of the border rider. Each of them carried two Colts. "Howdy, neighbors," said Sears softly. "What can I do for you? Set down and stay a while."

· Johnny Clement did not dismount. Instead he leaned forward on the horn of his Pendleton-made saddle and looked past Fargo Sears at the stock pen, "That's a fine lot of cattle you've got there," he said. "Plenty of calves. Funny, too, because we've had a bad year for calves. Just finished our roundup-and found a lot of them missing. Figgered they might have been carried off by timber wolves . . . or catamounts . . . or mehbe rustlers!"

Fargo Sears hardly moved, but his eyes glinted fire for a moment. The three rannies behind him each shifted positions imperceptibly, their tense hands hung closer to their

gun-belts. "If I get your meaning," Sears said, "you're

accusing me of running off your calves. Now, listen! All the cattle on this spread are marked with the Lazy S brand! They're mine! Now git off my land or you'll be gunned off!"

Newt Clement's eyes flickered quickly to bis brother's, and then to Buck Desmond's grim race. Each of the men nodded silently. Wheeling their horses about, they rode quickly from the prairie ranch.

When they were high in the hills, Johnny Clement burst out-"I know those were our calves! But with his running iron on them, we just can't prove it. And without proof we

can't force a showdown! Right, Buck?" The lean rambler nodded

"That's right, Johnny. So it's up to us to get proof! I've got an idea . . . and I think it'll work. You two gents roundup all the Double-C calves you can find, and get them in the corral, Don't brand them! I'm heading into town. I've got to get something at the

bank." "At the bank?" Newt questioned. "Get

Buck smiled. "Fifty new silver dimes! You'll see what for!"

That night, when Buck rode back from town, Johnny Clement and Newt Clement had a whole passel of unbranded calves waiting for him in the corral. Dismounting, Buck shook a canvas bag before them. It jingled

"Now watch this!"

Quickly throwing the nearest mayerick, Buck kept the bawling calf close to the ground with one straining knee. Then, using a keenpointed belt knife, he cut a tiny slit in the calf's right shoulder. He thrust a glinting, new, shiny dime into the slit - under the maverick's skin. It was out of sight! Then Buck, rising, slapped the mayerick! At once it sprang up and ran off!

Buck turned to the Clement brothers.

"That cut'll heal within a week," he explained. "The silver won't hurt the calf at all! It'll just stay under the surface of the skin. You won't be able to see it, but you'll be able to feel it. Savvy?"

Johnny Clement nodded. "I get it," he said. "We plant a dime under the shoulder skin of every one of our unbranded calves. Then we turn them loose. And at the railroad sales in town a couple of weeks from now . . . "

"... we make our play!" Buck Desmond Two weeks later, at the stock sales in

As usual Fargo Sears had a huge nen, filled with fine calves. Several buyers were looking over his stock, when Buck Desmond followed by Newt and Johnny Clement strode up. A. frown of annovance crossed the husky rancher's face.

"You varmints meddling again?" he mut-

Buck nodded, "That's right, And this time, we aim to produce proof of your rustling!" Behind Buck a whole crowd of curious ranchers and cowboys had gathered. Word had quickly spread of Buck's bold words. Now the rambling cowboy faced Fargo Sears squarely. "Two weeks ago," he said, "we of a batch of Double-C calves. We let them run the range, unbranded. Now we aim to prove that you picked several of those calves

up, branded them, and put them with the rest of your stolen stock-to sell today!" As Fargo Sears' jaw hung down with amazement, Buck stepped quickly to the nearest calf. Quickly, he felt its shoulder. Pausing a moment, he moved on to another calf, touching its shoulder, he smiled grimly.

"Here it is!" he shouted. "The first one! Step right up, boys, and feel proof. A silver

dime . . . and it didn't get in there by accident !" As the surrounding cattlemen stepped forward, Fargo Sears suddenly sprang away. His

hands streaking down toward his low-slung .45's, he shouted, "That's enough! You asked for it, Desmond! Mebbe you found proof, but all it'll get you is a grave on Boot Hill!" As Sears pulled the triggers of his waist

guns, Buck Desmond flung himself to the side. His own hands blurred downward toward

Flame lanced across the stock pen, wreathed with white gunsmoke. The rambling cowhand's bullets struck home and Fargo Sears clutched his shoulder. Behind him, his gunslicks arrested their draws, as Buck's guns swung swiftly toward them. Slowly, reluctantly, their hands went up.

"Newt, you'd better go for the sheriff! I reckon all the gents here will testify to Sears' drawing first! And I reckon, too, that calves will testify to the reason why he had Past Buck, the stolen calves milled uneasily.

It was as if they knew that they hore two brands: one false, one true-one on their flank and one on their shoulder!

Read the thrilling adventures of BUCK DESMOND in every issue of GABBY HAYES





nswers S. TRUE, S. TRUE, S. FALSE, IT'S OUTSIDE, A. TRUE.



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